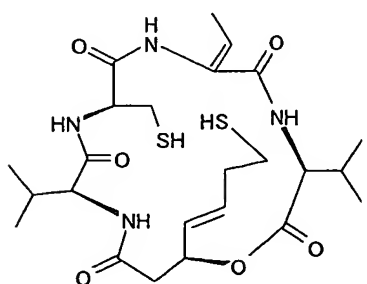


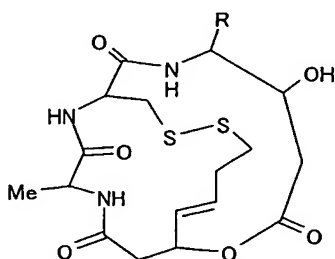
## Claims

1. An agent for inhibiting articular cartilage extracellular matrix degradation, comprising a histone deacetylase-inhibiting compound as an active ingredient.

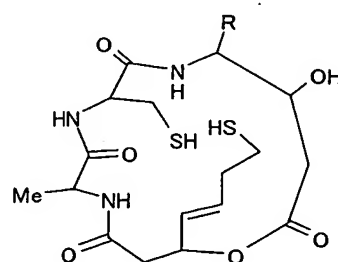
2. The agent according to claim 1, wherein the histone deacetylase-inhibiting compound is selected from FK228, a depsipeptide compound represented by the following formula (I), a depsipeptide compound represented by the following general formula (II), a depsipeptide compound represented by the following general formula (IIa), MS-27-275, Trichostatin A, NVP-LAQ824, SAHA, Apicidin, Phenylbutyrate, Valproic acid, Pivaloyloxymethyl butyrate, CI-994, Depudecin, Trapoxin, CHAP, and butyric acid:



(I)



(II)



(IIa)

wherein R represents an isopropyl group, a sec-butyl group, or an isobutyl group.

3. The agent according to claim 1, wherein the histone deacetylase-inhibiting compound is selected from FK228, the depsipeptide compound represented by the formula (I) described in claim 2, the depsipeptide compound represented by the general formula (II) described in claim 2, a depsipeptide compound represented by the general formula (IIa) described in claim 2, MS-27-275, Trichostatin A, NVP-LAQ824, SAHA, Apicidin, Phenylbutyrate, and Valproic acid.

4. The agent according to claim 1, wherein the histone deacetylase-inhibiting compound is a compound whose histone deacetylase inhibitory activity ( $IC_{50}$  value) measured according to a method described in "Yoshida et al., *Journal of Biological Chemistry*, 1990, Vol. 265, p17174-17179" is a concentration of 100  $\mu$ M or less.

5. The agent according to claim 1, which is an agent for the prevention or treatment of arthroseitis.

6. The agent according to claim 1, which is an agent for the prevention or treatment of rheumatic arthritis.

7. The agent according to claim 1, which is an agent for the prevention or treatment of osteoarthritis.

8. An agent for the prevention or treatment of articular cartilage extracellular matrix degradation in arthroseitis, comprising a histone deacetylase-inhibiting compound as an active ingredient.

9. An agent for the prevention or treatment of articular cartilage extracellular matrix degradation in rheumatic arthritis, comprising a histone deacetylase-inhibiting compound as an active ingredient.

10. An agent for the prevention or treatment of articular cartilage extracellular matrix degradation in osteoarthritis, comprising a histone deacetylase-inhibiting compound as an active ingredient.

11. Use of a histone deacetylase-inhibiting compound for the production of a medicament for inhibiting articular cartilage extracellular matrix degradation.

12. A method for preventing or treating a disease caused by articular cartilage extracellular matrix degradation, which comprises administering a therapeutically effective amount of a histone deacetylase-inhibiting compound to a patient.